

Philly-Con



“Survey Results”

PHILADELPHIA IN '77  
WORLDCON SURVEY RESULTS

I ran this survey for two reasons. First, to publicize our bid for the worldcon. Second, and more important, because it needed to be done. Everyone's been concerned about the problem of worldcon size. The survey was a compilation of most of the ideas that I heard advanced, and it was aimed at getting a fannish consensus on them. (Or is "fannish consensus" a contradiction in terms?)

Not everyone understood this. One respondent pointed out the two seemingly conflicting functions of a worldcon as both "a fan gathering and a recruiting device." Another reminded that "SF always wanted to be accepted by the masses, and now that it is, we shouldn't bitch." But others accused the committee of "being afraid of a large con," or "fascist," "antifan," or "quasi-elitist bastards." One person said the questionnaire itself was invalid because we were "implicitly assuming the answers... (we wanted) to derive."

The results are here for all to see. Some may even use them to help plan for a regional, or perhaps even a worldcon. By way of comparison and because worldcons do serve both new and old fan, I've tabulated the results three times:

1. using all 218 of the responses (a twelve per cent return) gathered by distributing the questionnaire at various cons around the country;
2. the 25 responses of NEOFEN, those who had been to no more than four regionals, and never been to a worldcon; and
3. the 39 responses from OLD TIMERS who'd been to three or more worldcons and at least thirteen regionals.

These three tabulations appear for all but the two following questions.

Number of Cons Attended	Number of Worldcons Attended
1- 4    30.7%	0    21.1%
5- 8    21.1%	1    21.1%
9-12    17.0%	2    16.1%
13+    29.8%	3+    25.2%
no reply    1.4%	no reply    16.5%
median = 7.52	median = 0.91

Judging by these, I'd say the average respondent had been in fandom about a year and a half. By the way, whenever I take a median, I use only those who responded to that particular question.

What Do You Think Is The Optimal Size For A Worldcon?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
There is none	25.2%	16.0%	35.9%
0- 999	4.6%	4.0%	12.8%
1000-1750	13.8%	12.0%	5.1%
1751-2500	22.5%	24.0%	20.5%
2501-3250	14.7%	20.0%	2.6%
over 3250	8.3%	28.0%	0.0%
no reply	10.9%	16.0%	23.1%
median	2202	2650	1839

No big surprise here. The neo's like-or are accustomed to-larger cons. The 2202 median is about the size of Noreastcon, Boston 1971.

comments:

"irrelevant...6000...5000...worldcons should be expected to be larger and should include all segments of sci fi fandom...depends on facilities and style of con...as many as sign up...all the way ...even Westercon is too big...it depends on the capacity of the hotel and the quality of the program...the bigger the better...as many as possible...utilize a convention center if there is one... con should be the biggest event-it is impossible to keep under control...what the facilities will hold...you should establish how many people you can handle and include that in your bid...limit by space available..."

Nine votes for larger worldcons; one for "irrelevant;" one for smaller; and six for variable size depending on the facilities. There's been a lot of talk about cut-off figures, and over one third of the respondents were in favor of it (see next page). A lot of cities haven't bid for worldcons because there's no facilities there for the number of attendees at a Discon-sized event. It might be that such a city, by advertising limited figures in attendance-due to facilities, could win a future bid.

How Can The Size Of A Worldcon Be Controlled?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
Can't be controlled	10.1%	12.0%	15.4%
Attendance by invitation only	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Very high registration fee	13.3%	12.0%	20.5%
A registration test	6.0%	16.0%	0.0%
No walk-in registration	38.1%	48.0%	35.6%
Severely limit publicity	37.2%	16.0%	56.4%
Cut some activities	24.8%	4.0%	46.2%
Set a cut-off figure	38.5%	36.0%	33.3%
Seperate programming into two or more hotels	10.6%	12.0%	12.8%
Hold seperate cons in other cities	9.2%	12.0%	7.7%

It's interesting that the neo's, who are normally thought of as just walking in to a con, were so opposed to walk-in registration. Unless, of course, their very low vote on limiting publicity meant "no walk-ins, but give plenty of advance word."

can't be controlled: "shouldn't be...get the manpower to handle it...hope it turns out good, otherwise pray...only with great difficulty...follow MidAmericon approach...shouldn't be controlled--undemocratic...control is immoral"

Maybe not in the area of size, but all cons are controlled to some extent, if only to setting up a program and registration.

attendance by invitation only: "too-elitist-not fanish...who gets invited?...a complex chain of acquaintances"

Thank Ghu, this got such a low vote. A fanish Four Hundred is the last thing we need.

very high registration fee: see the next question

a registration test: "fascist...name one SF book and two authors...really! how dare you!"

Another bad idea I was happy to see voted down.

no walk-in registration: "no one day registrations...watch for gate crashers, if implimented"

This is a fairly popular idea, but how could it be implimented without going totally fascist. This is tied in with the idea of a cut-off figure, and these raise two questions. What about the neo's we're trying to recruit, and what about the old time fan, especially the important or popular one, who shows up to register at the door because he/she just became able to attend? Aside from the idea of charging full fees up through the end of the con, which might have discouraged some of the several hundred people who showed up on Monday at Discon and got in cheap, I don't personally like this idea.

severely limit publicity: "tends to eliminate walk-ins...have two cons; publicize one mundanely, the other to fandom...defeats the purpose...trufen will find out anyway; one announcement in Locus ought to do it"

Everyone seems to have forgotten that all the attendees at any given worldcon know who won the bid voted at that con. Besides, who's got the power to censor all fanzines to limit publicity. Like everything else this discriminates against the neo's. Perhaps mundane publicity should be cut down. Most nonfan coverage is, as somebody said, "just a royal pain in the ass anyway." Stories are ninty per cent concerned with "Gosh-wow" fandom, old comics, Star Trek, and the perverted nature of the masquerade. All we get out of it are a lot of walk-ins coming more out of curiosity than interest.

cut some activities: "cut off activities large enough to have their own major cons...good idea, but tricky...accentuate SF aspects and discourage other interest groups that show up at cons... the main limitation should be on any activity that can support its own large con...of course, those involved in those groups will disagree...on the other hand you can't stop private goings-on...how would you go about banning a group...how do you keep them out...(expletive deleted)...nothing, let freedom ring... everyone has a right to be there; nobody should be excluded ...I don't like these fringe fandoms, but I don't believe in exclusionism...why discourage anyone...eliminate nothing, instead, add more...this would create factionalism beyond belief ...the worldcon is the worldcon. to eliminate fringe constituencies is to cut your own throat with a dull kris...no one has the right to dogmatically eliminate anyone--that is the antithesis of what fandom really is...who appoints the committee; I, sure as hell, will not give anyone the right to decide my interests are unimportant!"

Some things have been eliminated, or simply haven't even been brought up. When was the last regional with a Star Trek panel? Has there been a Planet of the Apes or a Perry Rhodan panel? Wasn't Baycon the last worldcon with a major S.C.A. event? Of course, each of these is well represented in the huxter room, but do their devotees attend just to spend money? Some do. Some come for the same reason most of us attend--to see our friends, often at private parties the committee has no control over. The point is, though, that some attend because they do expect to be programmed for. Since their interests have long been eliminated, the fairer thing to do would be for the special interest fanzines to make this known. Not that, to take the most obvious example, there won't be any Star Trek programming or films at MidAmericon, but that for some time there hasn't been any Star Trek programming at most large SF cons.

set a cut-off figure: "first come, first serve...limit membership to those who have supported or attended previous worldcons and those invited by such a person--with strict security...but save some for latecomers"

An interesting idea, but difficult to do. How do you eliminate

the problems of gate crashers, neos, and people who just decide to show-or just become able to show-at the last minute. One solution might be to allow for a certain percentage of last minute conversions from supporting to attending (with a high conversion fee) in setting the cut-off figure and to keep a certain number of memberships, say two hundred, for walk-ins. These last four ideas; no walk-ins, limit publicity, cut activities, and set a cut-off on attendance all got considerably larger response than anything else. Perhaps, one or two of the larger regionals, Lunacon and Westercon, for example, might want to give them a trial run. Its too late for any worldcon before Orlando to impliment them.

seperate programming into two or more hotels: nobody really commented on this idea which doesn't reduce the crowd so much as spread it out over a much wider area. Both Kansas City and Orlando are going to try it, so we'll just have to wait and see.

hold seperate cons in other cities: "schedule a fringe fan con at the same time...seperate cons; one for the good people, one for the rest (LW: I hope he's kidding!)...might be a good idea ...competing con appealing to fringe fans...different cities at different times...if there were two worldcons in different parts of the country, it would be easier to get to a worldcon for those who lived nearby"

Halloween weekend is (was?) the first World Fantasy Convention. If this idea works, it might tend to drain off the more fantasy oriented fans. Will it be a one-shot or an annual event? How big will it be? Will there be awards? a rotation schedule? These are problems yet to be worked out. NASFiC showed what could happen if two worldcons were in competition, but there were other causes for its problems. Its a nice idea. Two worldcons rotating across the country would save a lot of money on transportation, but which one would give out the Hugoes? Also, any weekend large enough to accommodate a worldcon probably already has at least one regional.

How High Should The FINAL Registration Figure Be?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
\$ 0 - \$ 5	10.1%	8.0%	0.0%
6 - 10	31.7%	48.0%	20.5%
11 - 15	15.1%	8.0%	12.8%
16 - 20	9.6%	4.0%	7.7%
21 - 30	8.7%	16.0%	7.7%
over \$30	12.8%	12.0%	25.6%
no reply	12.0%	4.0%	25.6%
median	\$10.73	\$4.58	\$12.50

The total figure was what it was up to MidAmericon, and what it may be again, if their idea doesn't work. Even the old-timers dislike much higher fees than that (although a lot didn't say), but registration won't be at the neo's figure much before Mephistopholes has to buy antifreeze.

comments:

\$50 maximum, if no walk-ins, a cut-off figure, and separate events...free...as high a fee at the door as needed to bring the desired results...\$15; I think its high enough to discourage any last minute arrivals...an early low wholesale rate for clubs...con expenses expected plus 5-7% for extras not budgetted...its not the registration, its room, board, and transportation that count...depending on cost factors...high at the door as MidAmericon...\$100 (LW: gak!)...registration fee setup as announced for MidAmericon...enough to meet expenses...depending on what estimated costs are...\$100 (LW: again, gak!)...\$6-10, provided advanced registration is less than \$5 (LW: yeah, right, kid)...as low as possible...sliding registration fee increasing with time...rising fees ala Mid Americon...sliding fee ala MidAmericon has its merits...depends on the economy...if you control size by raising the registration fee every month, you discriminate against students and others who are not settled and don't know if they will be able to attend until the summer of the convention."

The results seem to vindicate Kansas City. Roughly half of these responcees favor their strategy. Pricing based on estimated costs is generally used for regionals. If a lot more than the estimated number show up, profits can be pretty good. If too few show up, the committee's in the red, a rare event, happily. If you stay at the hotel for a worldcon, you've got a minimum of a \$100 hotel bill, not to mention food and what you spent in the huxter room. Transportation these days also isn't cheap. To a local walk-in, though \$50 is pretty high, but then, it was set to discourage walk-ins. For those who are unsettled, the difference between a supporting and an attending membership to Kansas City was only \$2 when I bought it. That's not much of an investment.

Which Of These Should Be Eliminated To Discourage Attendance?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
Star Trek fandom	54.1%	36.0%	69.2%
S.C.A.	24.3%	8.0%	46.2%
Horror fandom	38.1%	36.0%	53.8%
Comics fandom	53.2%	44.0%	66.7%
Perry Rhodan fandom	50.9%	48.0%	51.3%
Burroughs Bibliophiles	14.2%	16.0%	10.3%
Day/Night movies	5.0%	0.0%	10.3%
Hyborean Legion	14.7%	12.0%	15.4%
Georgette Heyer Society	22.9%	24.0%	20.5%
Huxter room	1.6%	0.0%	3.1%
Fringe fan huxtering	42.2%	12.0%	56.4%
Art show	3.7%	4.0%	0.0%
masquerade	4.1%	16.0%	0.0%
Hugo banquet	4.6%	8.0%	5.1%

In drawing up this list I tried to put everything that I could think of, on it. That included activities I enjoyed and activities that are traditional at worldcons. I missed some out of ignorance or memory lapse, but people reminded me-or informed me-of them. There were thirteen write-in votes.

Dorsai	3
Planet of the Apes fandom	3
Gor fandom	2
Church of All Worlds	1
fringe politics	1
nostalgia fandom	1
scientology	1

"superstar GOH like at KC con" 1

I seperated that last one for DRAMATIC EFFECT. Hopefully, it was a neo or a wise guy, but I've heard mutterings that part of the expected large turnout for Kansas City will be their own fault for picking Heinlein as GOH. If anything about this survey was "the antithesis of fandom," it is this responce.

Enough of the editorial. Two things surprised me on this question, an antipathy to the movies not reflected in the actual vote and a latent stream of fannish altruism.

movies: "eliminate the films; anyone coming for them won't be awake for the rest of the con...night, yes, but not entirely ...cut the length of the movie program at midnight or so... close the movies at 3 AM and clear the hall"

Anyone expecting a decent night's sleep at a con hasn't been to very many. The movies are for people who don't like to party, movie buffs, and people needing a place to crash. Since movie



programs aren't really publicized ahead of time and since Sturgeon's Law is especially true of SF/horror films, I don't think anybody comes to a con for the movies. (Although a program with Fantasia, episodes of The Prisoner and Honor Blackman Avengers, and all of that year's dramatic Hugo nominees might be a different story.)

altruism: "eliminate Star Trek--and I'm a Trekkie...eliminate the S.C.A.--I am a member but don't see any reason for having S.C.A. events at cons...though I'm a Heyerfan, I don't see how it relates to SF"

The people who wrote these replies show why the S.C.A., Star Trek, and the Heyer Society had events at cons--because SF fans were also fans of each of these. If they were eliminated, forced out of program, huxter room, and all, many of their fans would still come to the con, and they wouldn't be disappointed. The ones who wouldn't show-or would come and be disappointed-are the fans who have no interest in SF. Maybe some would be converted, but a person with no interest in SF, per se is a mundane and really should not expect to be programmed for at an SF con. (End of editorial # 2)

There were a lot of expected comments on how various things were traditional at worldcons, huxters, art show, the Heyerfen and the Bibliophiles, the banquet, and the masquerade. One person said that he thought the Meet the Authors Party should be changed because of its size. How do you crowd 300 authors in with 3000 fans and get a small cocktail-party atmosphere? Finally on the subject of eliminations there was this comment regarding the huxter room;

"We want people who deal with our interests in their merchandise, but not rip-off artists. Everyone else has a right to be there."

How Can The Masquerade Be Made More Managable?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
It can't be	23.9%	24.0%	25.6%
Limit the number of contestants	39.0%	36.0%	28.2%
Limit the size of the audience	7.3%	8.0%	5.1%
Limit both	9.2%	8.0%	5.1%
No reply	20.6%	24.0%	35.9%

It's interesting that here is the greatest agreement between the three categories of respondent. However, when asked how either the contestants or the audience might be limited in number, the three differ greatly. Yet, almost fifty percent favored some degree of limitation.

The question arises, why aren't the masquerade and (later) the Hugo Banquet as managable as would be liked? The answer is simply that these are the two events just about everyone attends. At Discon that meant some three thousand people in a single room for a number of hours. The masquerade featured over a hundred people in costume who had to be kept moving despite lengthy presentations and a large and impatient (and I was one of them) corps of photographers. The banquet involved feeding several hundred people, and then having the food quietly cleared as a long string of speeches began. Like carrying a number of large, but empty boxes, it is the aquardness, rather than the sheer weight, that creates problems.

comments: "any limit would help...drop the masquerade fast...start on time; if anyone is cut out, audience or contestant, tough!... why should it be controlled? Have as many contestants as wish to be there...the audience is fine...anybody who gets sick of it can leave--this will effectively limit the size...limitting the size of the con's attendance will automatically help"

How Can The Number Of Contestants Be Limited?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
Establish a cut-off figure	16.5%	28.0%	7.7%
Charge a pro-rated fee	6.4%	12.0%	5.1%
Limit the time for presentations	39.0%	12.0%	61.5%
Strict elimination during prejudging	49.1%	28.0%	69.2%
Have a series of smaller, elimination style masquerades	24.3%	24.0%	23.1%
Seperate the masquerade from the "talent show"	39.0%	24.0%	43.6%

How Can The Size Of The Audience Be Limited?

Establish a cut-off figure	18.3%	32.0%	15.4%
Have only one, con-appointed photographer	16.5%	16.0%	12.8%
Closed circuit TV	31.7%	32.0%	43.6%
Have a seperate room for photographers	44.0%	24.0%	61.5%
Have a series of smaller masquerades, rather than one large one	10.1%	0.0%	12.8%

I ran these two questions together bacause they're obviously related and because, more than once, a single comment referred to categories in each.

cut-off figure on contestants: "have qualifications...limit entry to those who have gotten at least honorable mention at a regional, allow no fringefandom costumes...have a preset maximum...the more the merrier"

charge a pro-rated fee: "something for the judges...\$5-use for cash prizes and give a refund to anybody eliminated in prejudging... if people don't like this, they won't come"

My idea regarding the fee was to use it to subsidize a con-appointed photographer who would make his pictures available at less than cost (another idea nobody seemed to like). The original purpose of the fee would be to cut down on cheapy entrees, cutesy kid entries, and overly large presentations.

limit the time for presentations: "set a time limit or cut these off completely...set limits and stick to them...one minute maximum...no presentation, only people in costume...cut the presentation completely--this will cut the audience considerably...no skits, two minute maximum...a six hour masquerade would be great IF things keep moving (no twenty minute acts) ...is already done, isn't it?"

No, it isn't done, and some past presentations have been unmercifully long. Perhaps the committee might announce a limit (far

in advance, of course), but allow a presentation that was going well keep it up. This would require a subtle, flexible MC, but such people do exist. Perhaps the GOH or Hugo Banquet MC.

strict elimination during prejudging: "perhaps a committee of experienced masqueraders could do this...publish a set of rules of what will be allowable...the best way to go...I agree in principle, but my sympathies are with those who would be kept out (LW:so are mine. I'd probably be one of them.)...eliminate the clowns who simply want to exercise their exhibitionism...some minimum standard of quality...each contestant to submit a photo of himself in costume prior to the con for a preliminary judgement (dibs on the belly dance/slave girl photos: LW)...screen people...but rejects still parade across...eliminate duds...preannounced criteria mailed with progress reports...print broad categories--as for art show--allow no contestant outside themes set...screen quality of contestants and, hence, their number...SF only...finalists (LW: from what?)...limit the number of slave girls to 100 or so--no three hour plays...no Star Trek (I've been to 5 masquerades and enough's enough), belly dancers, etc."

Slipshod costumes have always been a complaint. Sure quality isn't always cheap, but some care should be taken. Suggestions for prejudging criteria run to everything from legitimate questions of quality to use of the pencil test for slave girls. (Place a pencil just below her breast; if it falls, she's eligible.) Some criteria are needed, and whatever is set up should be enforced. Categories where there is a glut, e.g. slave girls and barbarians, might be eliminated, given a preset figure, or shifted to another contest. Theme contests for particular categories could be spread through the first part of the con (or even done at regionals) with only the finalists participating in the final event. Nobody likes the idea of just kicking out a fellow fan, so those eliminated before-hand should be allowed to parade across, perhaps in groups to save time, and given seats with the luckier masqueraders.

have a series of smaller masquerades: "good idea...have a group of topical masquerades...two or more panels of judges working simultaneously, each doing different categories--and you can only enter one...have a preliminary well before...trouble to rebuild used costumes--some are quite fragile"

See my previous comments. That argument on the fragility of some costumes is only too true. A beautiful centaur costume was thoroughly wrecked by the third time its wearer had to climb onto the stage at NASFiC.

separate the masquerade from the "talent show": "separate belly dancing...eliminate the "talent show" and the presentations...no skits, this could be a separate function...but keep both...yes, this would divide the audience...separate and then don't have the "talent show...allow no acting or presentations--just walk-ons...have them in opposite ends of a giant room with a bar in between, or have the "talent show" in the foyer of the

main contest room"

Besides the innumerable belly dancers at Discon, there was a magician, a puppeteer, a snake charmer, a Kung Fu exhibition, a demonstration of close order drill, and a complete musical number. Yes, all performers were in costume, and, for the most part their efforts were appreciated, but it was the wrong place for them. The presentations began when individuals enacted a piece of dialog from the story whose character they were impersonating. Now its way out of hand. If there's not enough "talent" for a completely new event--and except for the belly dancers, there probably isn't, why not schedule these performers as a separate category while the judges are deliberating? The committee could announce this ahead of time and hold auditions before. Anybody selected would be out of the masquerade proper, but he/she would have already won a prize, the right to be a spotlighted performer. Those not selected could still try their luck in the masquerade. (Of course, those selected might also get a special prize of some sort.)

set a cut-off figure for the audience: "shouldn't be...charge admission...start on time and close the doors...it wouldn't be fair...its the audience that's the problem...only if space and fire laws demand it...what the room will hold...reserve seating only"

Wall-to-wall people, which is every masquerade I've been at, would give any fire inspector a heart attack. Reserve seating, or any sort of cut-off point would be unfair.

have only one, con-appointed photographer: "get rid of those dumb amateur photographers (LW: dumb!?!)...this is a good idea, but it should not be a monopoly; some person could want a special shot...will not work...limits creativity--only one photographer, only one view"

Photographers, myself included, are a problem. A special area has to be set up for them. (Discon, those masochists, set up two, one for flash, one for without flash.) Photographers jump up to shoot, blocking others' views and, unless warned, blinding contestants. They can drown out a presentation shouting poses to the previous contestant and slow down the whole masquerade by having him/her/them stop to pose. Besides that, they seem to get annoyed when certain lesser types walk in front of them just as they shoot. This was one idea to hold down the problem. The photographer would have been selected for his expertise and would have taken shots of everyone (so the lesser costumes wouldn't feel slighted). Then these shots would have been made available cheaper than if individually shot (cheaper-by-the-dozen PLUS subsidy). Nobody liked the idea.

closed circuit TV: "better view than at the site"

That says it all. Nobody at the back of a 3000 person crowd can really see much of the masquerade. Lots of hotels have closed circuit facilities. Why not use them?

have a separate room for photographers: "by all means...depending on capacity of the hall...plan a second area where people can display and have photographed costumes...after, contestants can join photographers...get everyone; people could display costumes without joining the contest or after being eliminated ...two rooms: A-for viewing, no photographic equipment allowed, reserved seats; B-contestants congregate here before and after judging with backgrounds and lighting provided for 1/60" at F/2.8 with ASA 64 film"

I've already explained the problems with photographers. This is the far more popular way of solving them.. Use the prejudging room or have a separate room contestants go to before sitting down after their presentation to judges and audience. There aren't a lot of photographers (although this idea might generate more), but cutting them out from the audience would separate, if not eliminate some of the committee's problems.

have a series of masquerades: See my comments above.

other: "have people promenade through part of the hotel...eliminate the difference between contestants and audience--everybody wears a costume."

Between the monsters and the nekkid women, the promenade would be busted in five minutes. Try explaining fandom to the Vice Squad. Most people would show up in costumes courtesy of the hotel linen service (who would be just thrilled) or wearing street clothes that you couldn't tell weren't a costume unless you'd seen the same outfit in Sears the week before.

How Can The Hugo Banquet Be Made More Managable?

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Neo's</u>	<u>Old-Timers</u>
Can't be	9.2%	0.0%	7.7%
Cut-off figure on attendance	23.4%	24.0%	17.9%
Cut-off figure on diners	22.5%	4.0%	20.5%
Even HIGHER meal prices	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Eliminate dinner, just give the awards	26.1%	12.0%	41.0%
Have GOH give his/her speech at another time	29.4%	8.0%	61.5%
Announce the winners in advance	6.0%	8.0%	5.1%
Closed circuit TV	35.3%	40.0%	46.2%
Pipe speeches to other rooms via PA system	30.3%	20.0%	48.7%
Time limit on acceptance speeches	5.5%	36.0%	18.8%
Give awards other than Hugoes at another time	8.7%	20.0%	37.5%

comments:

"get room to handle the crowd...drop the banquet...not sure there is a problem...(cut attendance?) no...only diners attend... limit in-person audience to diners; PA system for the others... cut nondiner attendance...only diners permitted (LW: an interesting idea provided provision is made for everybody else)...(cut the number of diners?) no...(eliminate the dinner?) no...difficulties with the hotele; it's to their profit...good idea...(higher prices?) no...who goes now...(GOH speech elsewhen?) yes-maybe...perhaps... they do it now...good idea...no, this was done at Discon, and it was a bummer...(preannounce winners?) no-no-no...prefer not...(TV?) to all hotel rooms...maybe...if nothing better...but still hold banquet...(PA system?) no...but not to all rooms...(time limit on speeches?) yes...worth a try...time limit on GOH, too...get a hook for use on windy speakers...don't feed the MC till after his talk ...limit length of GOH speech (leniently suggest a time limit)... (give non-Hugoes elsewhen?) yes...seperate the banquet from the ceremonies...have banquet and awards on different nights...(other?) hold it outdoors...eliminate grouches from the audience...limit and clearly define the MC's duties"

The Hugo dinner is an enjoyable tradition, a profit center for the hotel, a showcase for GOH, and a way to reward the committee. Keeping out all nondiners is an interesting idea only if an alternative is provided. Closed circuit TV or a PA system would be that alternative, and the latter is easily possible. Suppose, at Discon, that all speeches had been piped into that lounge set up across from the banquet room. Most of the attendees, diner and nondiner alike were hundreds of feet from the head table. Those listening via PA in the lounge would have seen little less than they did, and (barring noise from those around them) probably heard as well or even better. There were mixed feelings about seperating the GOH from the banquet at Discon. A lot of people didn't expect

it, and so missed his speech entirely. If the banquet is to function as an SF Oscar Night, perhaps the GOH speech is out of place. But if it is moved, it should be showcased rather than just part of one afternoon's programming. Make him keynote speaker at some sort of opening ceremony Friday night (to balance with Saturday's masquerade and the banquet on Sunday). Most people are at the con by then. They'd get a chance to meet and hear him, and they'd see what he looks like at the beginning, instead of the end of the con. He might even present a GOH's award or some of the noncompetitive awards, the Campbell, the Gandalf, and the First Fandom Awards, which honor the same sort of service to SF over a period of time that his/her being selected GOH honors.

That completes the Philadelphia in '77 Worldcon Survey, an overlong, rather sercon, but I think necessary document. I've probably stepped on a lot of toes and left out half a hundred important points. I'm sorry--more or less--for both. This thing may be passe by the time you read it or it might be part of an as yet unknown fan feud. If you've got any comments, write. I may even answer. If you asked for a copy of this thing and didn't get it, sorry. I probably lost your address. Send me it, and I'll send you this. For now, bye. (See, I can write short sentences.) (I just can't spell.)

*Lew Wolhoff*  
243 Maclay Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110